/90 cont./

833 scratching, biting the eyelashes, nose-rubbing, in brief, the elements that play such a significant role among some inhabitants of the South Seas.

In contrast to the complicated overtures, the sexual act itself is simple and almost primitive. This is all the more strange in view of the fact that, unlike other peoples, there are no religious prohibitions to compel limitations in this respect, and otherwise the Meau are very imaginative. Nevertheless, they definitely reject all variations, in which, as is known, their Chinese neighbors are so unrivaled. The woman always lies on her back with her legs extended or slightly bent; the man lies on top of her, body against body, and their cheeks touch. Other positions are in part unknown and in part rejected. The Meau say of the Yau, who prefer the reverse position of
[186] the woman: "They copulate like dogs, this is not good for human beings." -- After the ejaculation both partners sleep a while, and then the girl gets up softly and prepares a meal for her friend from provisions that she has brought along; they eat, and the love play begins anew.

836 The settlement of love intrigues is interesting and characteristic of the attitude of the Meau. If it becomes known that a girl has several lovers, the latter ask her jointly whose love she enjoyed first. The others then withdraw without protest, and a young man would never think of competing with another for his girl.

577 836 As long as sexual intercourse does not result in pregnancy no one thinks of marriage. An attempt is made, only for the sake of public opinion, to keep all love affairs secret. In such matters no one will censure a lie, which is otherwise so strictly condemned by the Meau. Now, the villages of the Meau in northern Thailand are small, moreover, the members of the village community are subject to the marriage prohibition, since most of them are related by blood or belong to the sib. Hence, the young men must often walk for hours or days to reach their beloved. If a young man then returns home dead-tired and his father, as is unlikely, should ask him where

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577 836 he has been, the boy will answer that he /91/ was delayed on the hunt. The girl will say that she spent the time looking for some object, or that she stayed overnight with a girl friend, or give some other such excuse. When I quite innocently asked a young man who was returning from his three-day excursion where he had been, he replied in all seriousness: "Wild pigs have devastated our rice field, and I lay in wait for them. They were too clever, however, and I could not catch them." At the same time, his father, who had overheard our conversation, winked at me and later whispered into my ear: "He returned dead-tired from a visit to his girl."

581 For the Meau, the decisive factor in the selection of a female partner is not the social position, but the physical characteristics of the girl. When I asked a Meau who would [732 143] marry a stupid girl -- it was a case of cretinism, which occurs rather frequently -- he answered me briefly and characteristically: "A stupid man," even though in this case the girl belonged to a powerful and rich sib. The fact that girls at the [585 614] moment of marriage completely give up their connection with their sib and enter the sib of the husband may play an important role in this. Among the girls of the Meau, on the other hand, even though they are not concerned specifically about the social position of the man, there are other significant factors that are not connected with sexuality. This is indicated in the reply of girls whom I questioned about the type of man they would like to have. In one form or another the answer was always: "Clever and strong, in order to master life." Not a single one put any value on a handsome or "dashing" man. The closeness to nature of the Meau permits the girls to see clearly what proficiency in the primeval forest life means. To be sure, I never met a single incompetent man among the Meau. The stern laws of nature would soon cause him to disappear from this society.

595 833 513 Married people customarily have sexual union at night in their bedroom. In answer to my question as to what the other wives do if the husband, who shares his bed with all of his wives, bestows his attention on one, my informant said: "The others

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692 the office of judge for him. In such cases, if an appeal is made
[622] against his decision, the village chief is then the next higher
[596] court. In disputes within a large family, the head of the family
[693] officiates. For serious decisions, assemblies under the chairmanship of the village chief or the great chief are convened, as I have reported in the chapter, "Political Organization."

695 The judge, with the help of witnesses, tries to determine the facts of the case. Special importance is attached to the testimony of the witnesses, and can be, according to my experience, because among the Meau the witnesses always tell the truth, at least subjectively. Dhuraratsadorn (1) seems to have

1. Page 170.

made similar observations: "They believe that the Meau witnesses always tell the truth. In case of a crime, the Meau seldom question witnesses. If someone accuses another, the accused is either convicted or punished, or he may deny his guilt, /254/ in which case a fine is imposed on the accuser in
[681] favor of the accused. If it later turns out that he falsely denied
[626] his guilt, he is expelled from the community and must leave the village, for otherwise he would be killed."

In case of a criminal offense for which there are no witnesses, the investigations are discontinued after three years. Nevertheless, there is no time limitation for crimes. Even if the perpetrator is not discovered until ten years later, perhaps accidentally, he is punished exactly as if he had just been caught in the act.

In civil-law cases, too, when the assertions of the parties are contradictory, the judge tries to determine the truth through witnesses. The underlying principle is that the plaintiff and not the accused must prove his assertions. Oaths and oath formulas are unknown. Witnesses, like the parties, are strictly obliged to
[577] tell the truth, regardless of whether or not it is damaging to the witness or whether there are ties of kinship with the parties or
[687] witnesses. A refusal to give testimony is not permitted; false statements are punished severely.

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/460 cont./ somewhat soft /461/ and plaintive, especially in comparison with the Akha women, who are superior to them in hardiness, as these people generally are in relation to the Meau. I found among the Meau of both sexes particularly good and reliable porters, though, in general, they perform porter-service for strangers very unwillingly. After they had once declared themselves ready to come to terms, however, the men as well as the women, without another word, took on loads up to 50 kilograms, walked along with these on their backs so rapidly that we could hardly keep up with them, and steadfastly kept their promise.

The opposite of this pronounced mountain-folk character of the Meau is formed by their valley-dwelling neighbors, the Lao and the Schan /Shan/, who represent typical tropical people of the valley lowlands. They are accustomed to having Nature pour everything from her horn of plenty into their laps without any effort, they love idleness, and they are lazy and indolent, for a single annual harvest abundantly feeds the family. They, too, are cheerful, but unreliable and flighty. The Lao were indeed easy to persuade to serve as porters, but they would complain even if the loads weighed only 18 kilograms and usually ran away after one day!

The Meau treat women and children, as well as the subordinates and unfree (see the chapter, "Social Organization," the section, "Age Classes, Secret Societies, Rank Organization") well throughout and are courteous to superiors without being humble. Abadie (1) also points out: "The Meau women are

1. Page 151.

cheerful, gay, and not very shy, especially when they have acquired confidence."

Among one another the Meau are very friendly and have a pronounced property sense. Whereas with regard to foreign people any violation of their property rights immediately arouses their warlike instincts, among the unmarried lads even the female sex cannot provoke any deep enmities; for these reasons duels are unknown. Such behavior is quite plausible in view of their

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577 aforementioned honesty which condemns lying to such an extent that it is not resorted to even if, in giving testimony, a father could thereby save his son, as I have already discussed in detail in the chapter, "Law and /462/ the Administration of Justice." 181 153 Considering their urge for freedom, the Meau can otherwise be designated as thoroughly disciplined.

648 Moreover, they have both presence of mind and the ability to make decisions, and are also very enterprising. While I was staying in northern Thailand in 1937, a group of about 100 Meau including men, women, and children quite unexpectedly [166] appeared in the Thailand city of Lampang. They indicated that they wanted to seek out new residence sites farther to the south. They were allowed to camp at the railway station, and after a week railway coaches were put at their disposal, and they were actually transported to the southwest where they were allotted new dwelling space in the mountains there. If one considers what it means for the Meau to descend into the hated valleys and, in addition, to venture into the city of a Thai people, one will be convinced that such enterprise and determination are not readily found among any of the other mountain peoples of Farther India.

181 153 The Meau face the tasks of life quite methodically, and accordingly Savina (1) characterizes them: "Accustomed to

1. II, p. 185.

disentangling everything alone, a Meau never falls into difficulties." Marabail (2) comes to the following conclusion: "Whereas

2. Page 463.

the Man (Yau) is full of imagination and religion, the Meau is a materialist..."

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152 Emotions are readily apparent among the Meau. When a woman told us that three years ago her three sons had died of cholera within a few days, tears came into her eyes and she sobbed violently, though she was trying to master her emotions.

152 734 We were often able to observe how tenderly the Meau care for their sick. For example, a shaman had a completely paralyzed son about 22 years of age, who, however, was very active mentally. During the very first days of our stay, the old man carried his son on his back into our camp to ask me for help and healing. When I explained to him the hopelessness of the situation -- it was a case of progressive paralysis -- tears ran down his cheeks. Indeed, he had already so often beseeched his ancestors for help and offered them many sacrifices in vain. Nevertheless from then on the Meau always carried his son into our camp whenever I had some business with him, and tenderly laid him down near us so that he could participate in our conversations and thus be diverted.

156 123 The Meau are good-natured and companionable. In this connection I recall with what matter-of-fact hunting comradeship one Meau relieved me of my gun and rucksack and loaded them on his own back when he saw that, under the burden, I could scarcely keep up with his rapid pace in the steep thicket.

123 577 /464/ The Meau are almost excessively polite, without any influence on this behavior by materialistic mental reservations. Their innate politeness sometimes leads the Meau to little "white lies," which, however, according to their conception, are not regarded as lies. I had with me a white goat which was supposed to serve as tiger bait and had given it to the Meau to pasture in the maize fields. One day a Meau came to me and said: "Your goat seems to be sick. It has a wound in the stomach and has no appetite. I think that it will soon die." I, of course, had the goat brought to me immediately. It only had the skin on its stomach scratched a bit, and otherwise the animal was completely healthy. Later on it turned out that it had been in the way of the Meau during their harvesting.

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A 576 [648] [609] The Akha, too, treat women and children well, but are not nearly as polite as the Meau, are more robust in every respect, and believe less in the authority of the Whites, whom they approach with confidence. In any case, among the Akha nothing is to be seen of any overly great politeness toward strangers or one another, though they greet one another with the customary "where are you going" or "where do you come from." A [554] Among the Akha, as among the Meau, the younger ones must wait until they are addressed by the older ones. The Akha, however, are not familiar with any gesture of greeting. For M [177] [576] them the handshaking, folding of hands, or placing them on the chest, as is customary among the valley dwellers, is as unknown as the greeting gestures of the Meau, which are probably influenced by the Chinese.

If the Akha combine a visit with a request, they observe the same custom as the Meau do and casually mention the reason for their coming only in connection with the departure, likewise announced several times. As "please," the Akha use the word A 192 576 etšĭbĭlă̆; as "thank you," mŭhā̆. I could not find expressions for disdain, veneration, esteem, and astonishment. Expressions of fear and horror are tšŏ gŭ yŏ or only a drawn-out ī; the expression for hatred is mă̆ hŏ nŏn yă̆. As affirmation, they utter a drawn-out ō; as negation, măī; mădyă̆ is said with the meaning of "there is none."

A M 531 [577] In representational artistic talent, the Akha women, like those of the Meau, are far superior to the men. To be sure, the men of both peoples hardly have any opportunity for /476/ pictorial representation, which, in connection with the production of the richly ornamented clothing, is one of the virtues of a good housewife (see the chapter, "Men's Work and Women's Work"). Even in connection with these representations, however, the greediness of the Akha became apparent. Not only A 152 126 did they demand exorbitant prices for everything that I wanted to acquire and, if I was unwilling to agree to it, disappear at once with their articles, never to appear again, but the Akha were also the only people to whom I had to give a special payment for every object that my wife wanted to sketch. It was